

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim 11 has been amended by requiring the surface structures to be formed by directly embedding microparticles into the molding. Support for this amendment exists throughout the present specification. No new matter has been added through this amendment.

New claims 17-20 have been added in response to the Office Action's assertion that the process limitations in claim 11 were not being considered. Claim 17 is essentially claim 11 without process limitations. Claims 18-20 correspond to claims 12, 14 and 15, respectively. Accordingly, no new matter has been added through these new claims.

Claims 1-20 are currently pending, although claims 1-10 have been withdrawn from consideration.

The Office Action rejected claims 11-14 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as anticipated by U.S. patent 6,783,807 ("Huffer"), and claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious over Huffer in view of U.S. patent 6,800,304 ("Baumann"). In view of the following comments, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections.

The present invention requires the surface structures to be formed by directly embedding microparticles into the molding. The claimed invention also requires that the molding composition is made of materials which are capable of being "in softened or molten form," and capable of undergoing "thermal shaping." Huffer neither teaches nor suggests this invention.

Huffer discloses indirectly depositing particles on a heat resistant substrate using a coating process. Thus, rather than directly embedding his particles into his substrate, Huffer uses a coating process to indirectly deposit his particles on the substrate. Moreover, Huffer discloses that his substrates are materials suitable for chemical plant construction which are “durable and heat resistant.” (Col. 7, lines 56-61). Heat resistant materials, by definition, are not going to be “in softened or molten form” and/or subject to “thermal shaping.” Clearly, Huffer’s substrate materials are not the same as the claimed molding materials.

In sum, Huffer discloses indirectly depositing particles onto a heat resistant substrate. This disclosure does not and cannot disclose or suggest directly embedding particles into a substrate capable of being “in softened or molten form” and/or subject to “thermal shaping”: in fact, it is diametrically opposed to such direct embedding. Accordingly, Huffer cannot teach or suggest the claimed invention.

Baumann also discloses particles deposited onto a substrate through a coating process. Because neither Baumann nor Huffer discloses or suggests directly embedding particles into the molding as required by the claims, these references alone or in combination cannot anticipate or render obvious the claimed invention. In other words, Baumann cannot compensate for Huffer’s fatal deficiencies.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under §§ 102 and 103.

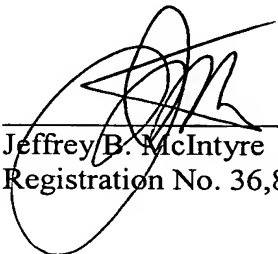
Application No. 10/506,993
Response to Office Action dated December 19, 2006

Applicants believe that the present application is in condition for allowance.

Prompt and favorable consideration is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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